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Monday is Day to Dine Together for a Drug-Free Iowa

Iowans are being encouraged to participate in the 9th Annual *Family Day – A Day to Eat Dinner with Your Children*, Monday, September 28. *Family Day* is sponsored by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) to promote parental involvement in family dinners as an effective tool to help keep kids drug free.

“The more parents engage in talking about the dangers of drugs, the less likely their children are to begin using drugs,” said Peter Komendowski, President of the Partnership for a Drug-Free Iowa. “Sitting around the dinner table together, at home or eating out, is a perfect opportunity for parents or other family members to begin or continue a dialogue with their kids on this important subject.”

A recent CASA report shows teens who have frequent family dinners (five or more times per week) are half as likely to use tobacco or marijuana, or try drugs in the future, compared to teens who have infrequent family dinners (fewer than three per week).

“A good way to start the conversation with children over dinner is to ask questions about friends and their behaviors, and to remind your kids that you care about their wellbeing,” said Komendowski. “One of the most common reasons cited by teenagers who don’t use drugs for their healthy choices is the fear of disappointing their parents.”

The start of the school year can mean changes in friends and activities for many middle and high school students, and now is a good time for parents to re-engage on the drug issue.

For more on how to start the conversation, go the Partnership’s web site at:

www.FaceItTogether.com/Programs/TakeFive/WhatParentsNeedtoKnow/tabid/112/Default.aspx.

If you have an emergency, call the Iowa Substance Abuse Information Center 24/7 toll-free Helpline at 866-242-4111.